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SUBJECT: PRESS STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF COMMANDERS CONFERENCE

¶1. Post issued a press statement on January 21 supporting UN and African Union (AU) efforts to facilitate a conference of Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatory military commanders and to encourage the Sudanese Government to provide the security assurances necessary for the conference to proceed.

¶2. The text of the press statement is as follows:

(Begin text)

-- The Embassy of the United States calls for the early resumption of political talks involving signatories and non-signatories of the Darfur Peace Agreement aimed at establishing a cessation of hostilities and a lasting peace in Darfur.

-- The United States supports the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations to facilitate in the coming days a meeting of non-signatory military commanders in order to lay a foundation for a broader political dialogue, as stipulated in the conclusions to the November 16 UN/AU meeting in Addis Ababa.

-- The United States calls on non-signatories to seek a peaceful resolution of the crisis in Darfur within the framework of the Darfur Peace Agreement and to work with the Government of National Unity and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Minni Minawi to resolve remaining disputes peacefully.

-- The United States calls on the Government of Sudan to respond positively to the request from the African Union for assurances that such a meeting of non-signatory commanders can take place under secure conditions.

(End text)

HUME